

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1-44 and add new claims as follows:

1-44. (Canceled).

45. (New) A method for searching messages in a conversation-based message system, comprising:

receiving a query from a requestor;

transmitting the query to a conversation management system;

receiving from the conversation management system a list of conversations, each of the conversations in the list having a respective conversation identifier, and wherein each conversation comprises one or more messages sharing a common set of characteristics that meet first predefined criteria; and

presenting at least a portion of the list of conversations to the requestor.

46. (New) The method of claim 45, wherein the conversations are presented to the requestor in an order determined in accordance with second predefined criteria.

47. (New) The method of claim 46, wherein the second predefined criteria includes a date/time value of a most recently received message of a respective conversation.

48. (New) The method of claim 46, wherein the second predefined criteria includes a date/time value of a most recently received message of a respective conversation relevant to the search query.

49. (New) A method for searching messages, comprising:

communicating a search request to a messaging system;

receiving from the messaging system a plurality of messages, each message having a unique message identifier and belonging to a respective conversation;

generating a plurality of conversations, each conversation including a respective conversation identifier and unique subset of the plurality of messages; and

displaying a portion of the list of conversations in an order determined in accordance with predefined criteria, each conversation being represented as a single item in the list.

50. (New) A method for displaying messages, comprising:

receiving a plurality of messages directed to a user, each message having a unique message identifier;

generating a plurality of conversations, each conversation including a respective conversation identifier and unique subset of the plurality of electronic messages;

selecting a list of conversations from the plurality of conversations in accordance with a predefined query; and

displaying the list of conversations in an order determined in accordance with first predefined criteria, each conversation being represented as a single item in the list.

51. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein the respective conversation identifier is distinct from a subject reference of the message.

52. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein the respective conversation identifier is based in part on information not including a subject reference of the message.

53. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein each conversation comprises messages sharing a common set of characteristics that meet second predefined criteria.

54. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein the second predefined criteria include having a close temporal relationship among the unique subset.

55. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein the common set of characteristics include the subject reference of the messages and at least one characteristic of the messages other than the subject reference.

56. (New) A method for searching messages in a conversation-based message system, comprising:

receiving a query from a requestor;

transmitting the query to a conversation management system;

receiving from the conversation management system a list of conversations, each of the conversations in the list having a respective conversation identifier, and wherein each conversation comprises one or more messages sharing a common set of characteristics that meet first predefined criteria, including at least one electronic message relevant to the query; and

presenting at least a portion of the list of conversations to the requestor.

57. (New) The method of claim 56, wherein the conversations are presented to the requestor in an order determined by second predefined criteria.

58. (New) The method of claim 56, wherein the conversations are presented to the requestor in an order determined in accordance with a date/time of the most recent message in each conversation that is relevant to the query.
59. (New) A method for displaying messages, comprising:
receiving a plurality of messages directed to a user, each message having a unique message identifier;
generating a plurality of conversations such that each conversation comprises a unique subset of the plurality of electronic messages and a respective conversation identifier;
selecting a list of conversations from the plurality of conversations in accordance with a predefined query; and
displaying the list of conversations in an order determined in accordance with predefined criteria, each conversation being represented as a single item in the list.
60. (New) The method of claim 59, wherein the respective conversation identifier is distinct from a subject reference of the message.
61. (New) A system for searching messages, comprising:
a receiving module for receiving a plurality of messages directed to a user, each message having a unique message identifier;
a conversation module for generating a plurality of conversations, each conversation including a respective conversation identifier and unique subset of the plurality of electronic messages; and
a display preparation module for selecting a list of conversations from the plurality of conversations in accordance with a predefined query and preparing for display the list of conversations in an order determined in accordance with first predefined criteria, each conversation being represented as a single item in the list.
62. (New) The system of claim 61, wherein the respective conversation identifier is distinct from a subject reference of the message.
63. (New) The system of claim 61, wherein the respective conversation identifier is based in part on information not including a subject reference of the message.
64. (New) The system of claim 61, wherein each conversation comprises messages sharing a common set of characteristics that meet second predefined criteria.

65. (New) The system of claim 64, wherein the common set of characteristics includes having a close temporal relationship among the unique subset.

66. (New) The system of claim 64, wherein the common set of characteristics includes a subject reference of the messages and at least one characteristic of the messages other than the subject reference.

67. (New) The system of claim 64, wherein the conversations are prepared for presentation to the requestor in an order determined in accordance with a date/time of the most recent message in each conversation that is relevant to the query.

68. (New) A system for searching messages in a conversation-based message system, comprising:

- a search module for receiving a query from a requestor and transmitting the query to a conversation management system;

- a receiving module for receiving from the conversation management system a list of conversations, each of the conversations in the list having a respective conversation identifier, and wherein each conversation comprises one or more messages, and at least one message relevant to the query; and

- a presentation module for presenting at least a portion of the list of conversations to the requestor.

69. (New) The method of claim 68, wherein the conversations are presented to the requestor in an order determined in accordance with predefined criteria.

70. (New) A computer program product, for use in conjunction with a computer system, the computer program product comprising:

- instructions for receiving a plurality of messages directed to a user, each message having a unique message identifier;

- instructions for generating a plurality of conversations, each conversation including a respective conversation identifier and unique subset of the plurality of electronic messages; and

- instructions for selecting a list of conversations from the plurality of conversations in accordance with a predefined query; and

instructions for preparing for display the list of conversations in an order determined in accordance with first predefined criteria, each conversation being represented as a single item in the list.

71. (New) The computer program product of claim 70, wherein the respective conversation identifier is different from a subject reference of the message.

72. (New) The computer program product of claim 70, wherein the respective conversation identifier is based in part on information not including a subject reference of the message.

73. (New) The computer program product of claim 70, wherein each conversation comprises messages sharing a common set of characteristics that meet second predefined criteria.

74. (New) The computer program product of claim 73, wherein the common set of characteristics includes having a close temporal relationship among the unique subset.

75. (New) The computer program product of claim 74, wherein the common set of characteristics includes a subject reference of the messages and at least one characteristic of the messages other than the subject reference.

76. (New) The computer program product of claim 70, wherein the instructions for preparing prepare the list of conversations for display in an order determined in accordance with a date/time of the most recent message in each conversation that is relevant to the predefined query.

77. (New) A computer program product, for use in conjunction with a computer system, the computer program product comprising:

- instructions for receiving a query from a requestor;
- instructions for transmitting the query to a conversation management system;
- instructions for receiving from the conversation management system a list of conversations, each of the conversations in the list having a respective conversation identifier, and wherein each conversation comprises one or more messages sharing a common set of characteristics that meet first predefined criteria, and at least one electronic message relevant to the query; and

instructions for presenting at least a portion of the list of conversations to the requestor.

78. (New) The computer program product of claim 77, wherein the conversations are presented to the requestor in an order determined in accordance with second predefined criteria.

79. (New) A computer program product, for use in conjunction with a computer system, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for receiving a plurality of messages directed to a user, each message having a unique message identifier;

instructions for generating a plurality of conversations such that each conversation comprises a unique subset of the plurality of electronic messages and a respective conversation identifier;

instructions for selecting a list of conversations from the plurality of conversations in accordance with a predefined query; and

instructions for preparing for display the list of conversations in an order determined in accordance with predefined criteria, each conversation being represented as a single item in the list.

80. (New) The computer program product of claim 79, wherein the respective conversation identifier is different from a subject reference of the message.

81. (New) A system for searching messages in a conversation-based message system, comprising:

means for receiving a query from a requestor;

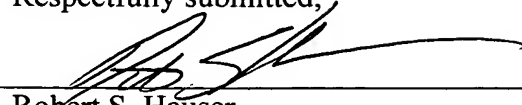
means for transmitting the query to a conversation management system;

means for receiving from the conversation management system a list of conversations, each of the conversations in the list having a respective conversation identifier, and wherein each conversation comprises one or more electronic messages sharing a common set of characteristics that meet predefined criteria; and

means for presenting at least a portion of the list of conversations to the requestor.

Respectfully submitted,

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